

Duxbury's early settlers:

This is the second part of last week's story on the Sampson grant.

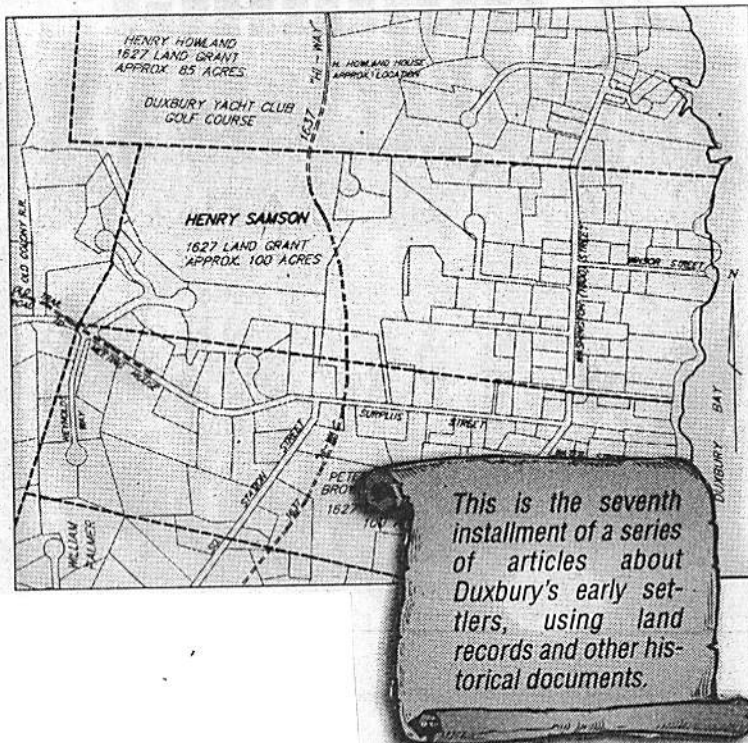
— Ed

Another Samson Family story involves Capt. Briggs Sampson, ironically master of the brig Sampson. Captain Sampson met another vessel at sea. When the master of the other vessel hailed his ship with "What brig is that?" "Brig Sampson" was the reply. "What is her captain's name?"



BY LAMONT "MONTY" HEALY

"Briggs Sampson," came the answer. This answer seeming identical to the first, the question was repeated over and over. The vessels separated with the other captain displeased that a civil answer was not returned to a civil question, and Captain Briggs Sampson resolved to avoid such a misunderstanding in the future by prefixing "Henry" to his name. I have found a Briggs Sampson legally changing his name to Henry B. Sampson in 1818 in Massachusetts and record of his being a master mariner for 30 to 35 years, and now have found the brig Sampson (all this courtesy of Patrick Browne and Carolyn Ravenscroft of the Duxbury Rural and Historical Society).



The brig Samson was built and owned by Levi Samson, a master carpenter and a relative (probably from the Abraham side of the Samsons) of Capt. Henry B. Sampson. Capt. H.B. followed his brother William with several members of his family, to Como, Ill. in 1836 after the shipping business in Duxbury started its decline. Como, given in a family history as being in Illinois, now seems to be in Wisconsin, a few miles from the Illinois border. I know of no change in the northern border of Illinois after it was initially pushed 60 miles to the north, but there was a dispute involving the Winnebago Indian lands.

Around the time when Cornelius Sampson transferred land to Lot Stetson and Samuel Winsor (1785), Nathaniel Winsor, Samuel's brother, already owned the property to the north and had a thriving wharf business with another brother Joshua. In all there were five Winsor brothers involved in the wharf business, William and John being the other two. Their father was Samuel Winsor, who came to Duxbury from Boston and first settled on Clark's Island and then moved to Captain's Hill. He married Rhoda Delano in 1746 and they had 10 children in all.

Samuel paid \$50 for the right to choose which part of the Stetson-Winsor property he wanted when he and Stetson

Pilgrim Henry Samson

split the property up. It appears that Samuel Winsor chose the northerly half and then eventually purchased most of the southerly half, including both sides of what is now Winsor Street. The Winsors allowed their children, both sons and daughters, to build houses on their land and then later gave or sold them the land.

This grant line runs right between the Methodist Episcopal Church built in 1823 (now St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church) and the Wesleyan Methodist Church built in 1844 (now the Pilgrim Church) properties. Seth Sprague, who was a successor to the Henry Howland Grant (north of the line), provided the land and funds for the St. John Church. He then, when he became disenchanted with that church, bought the land and had the Pilgrim Church built in St. John's "front yard."

Nathaniel Winsor (born 1747) built the house in 1800 that sits across Washington Street from the two churches. He and his wife Olive (Soule) had nine children. In 1826 he sold the house to his youngest son Martin and in later years the property was known as the Martin Winsor Homestead. In the same year son Martin sold it back to the father Nathaniel, who was about 80 at the time. It seems Nathaniel did this with several of his children; somehow this was to keep the property in the family. Maybe these were, again, some kind of mortgage.

In Nathaniel's 1830 will (he died in 1840 at 93) he left five dwellings to the children occupying them at the time. As for the Martin Winsor Homestead, Martin got the easterly half, in trust for his son Albert, and his youngest sister Nancy Howland got the westerly half, in trust for her son Lucien. From 1840 to 1890 the property was bought and sold by various members of the Winsor family.

Finally Sanford C. Winsor sold the bulk of the property to Capt. George Cushman, who sold it to Nellie A. Clapp in 1905. In 1933 William F. Clapp, Nellie's husband, a professor at M.I.T., converted the barn into a laboratory,

which became world famous for its investigations of marine borers and marine destruction. When Mr. Clapp died in 1951, Albert P. Richards became president of the organization and continued the laboratory studies. After Mr. Richard's death in 1963 the William F. Clapp Laboratories became part of Battelle's Columbus Laboratories.

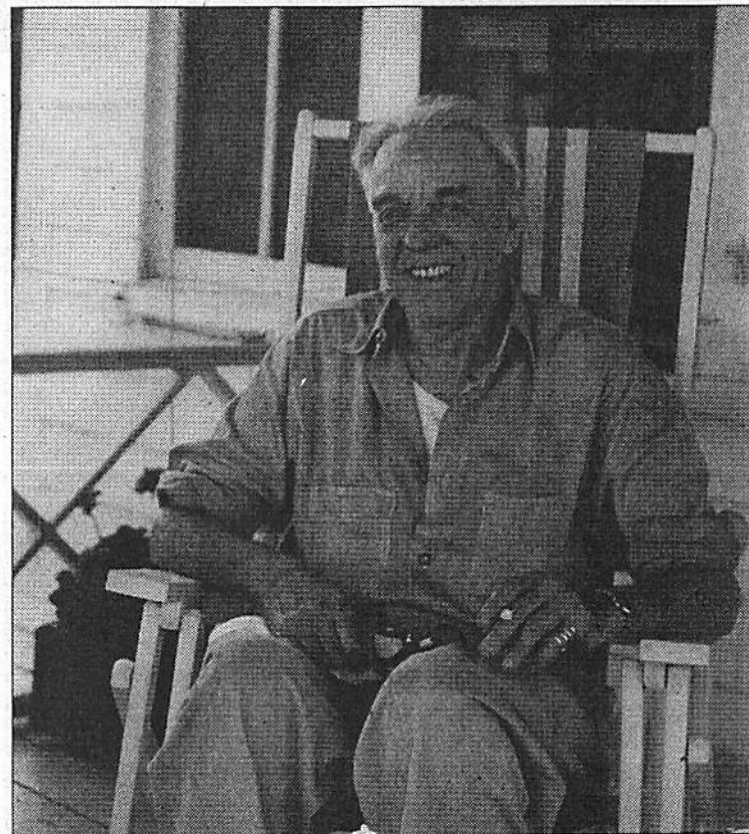
Nathaniel Winsor built a house for his daughter Nancy when she married Capt. John Howland in 1803. This was about the time when Washington Street was built, and this is now the Winsor House. John Howland sold the house to Seth Sprague, Jr. as trustee for Nancy Howland in 1837. Seth Sprague, Jr. and the heirs of Nancy Howland sold the property to Capt. Daniel L. Winsor in 1842. The property stayed in the Winsor family from that time until Capt.

Daniel's grandson Daniel inherited it and opened it as an inn in 1932. Daniel and Marie Winsor operated the Winsor House Inn successfully for 30 years and in 1962 sold it to Lucien and Gilberte Vivas. David Wells acquired the property in 1969, and he in turn sold it to Richard, David and Katherine Connor in 1971. David and Patricia O'Connell bought the inn in 1976 and have operated it continuously since then.

Long before the Samsons sold the northeast part of the farm to Winsor/Stetson they sold the southerly part to John Delano and then Jonathan Delano, who passed the property to his son Ebenezer Delano in 1763, property which eventually became part of the Wor-

mall-Reynolds farm.

There are at least 10 date-boarded houses on the Henry Sampson grant, most of them being Winsor houses. Four of Samuel Winsor's six sons built houses on Winsor Street, though only Samuel's and Spencer's are date-boarded. The houses on Washington Street that are in this grant go from numbers 342 (Stetson Place) to 405. They include the houses built by: Jesse Howard (1796); Lot Stetson (1787); Charles Winsor (1805); Calvin Gardner (1830); Otis Winsor (1810); John Howland (Nancy Winsor; 1803, the Winsor House Inn); and the house built by Nathaniel Winsor 405 (1800, now Battelle Laboratories).



William F. "Bill" Clapp, founder of Clapp Laboratories.